COMIC CUTS 2D.

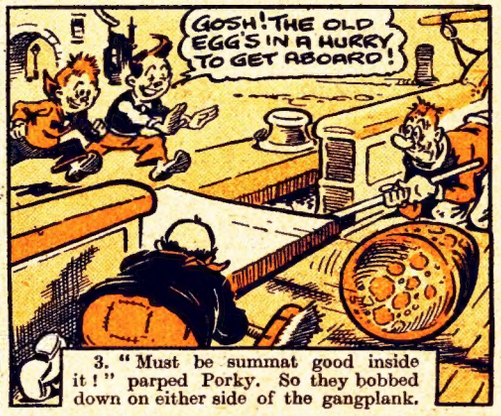
EASTER FUN THAT TAKES THE BUN!

[No. 2,686.] THE CRUSOE KIDS EGG THE MATES ON AT EASTER! [APRIL 11, 1942.]

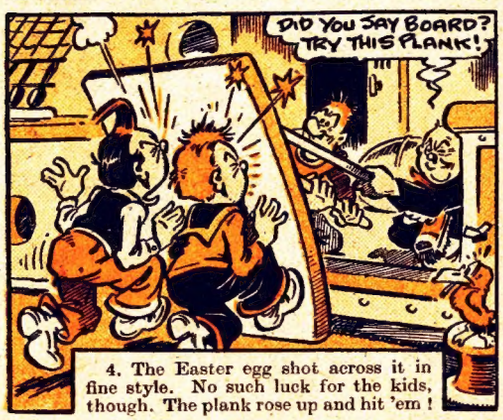
SORRY I'VE GOT NO PAPER TO WRAP THE BUN MIXTURE IN, BOYS!
DON'T FRET, MISTER, WE'VE BROUGHT OUR PRE-WAR EASTER EGG CASE TO POP THE FLOUR IN!
ONIONS
FLOUR
SPOON TAKERS

1. The kids had popped ashore to get some hot cross bun mixture. They used a large Easter egg, saving paper.

2. Then back they went to the ship, trundling the egg along. But the mates saw them and decided to sneak the egg.



3. "Must be summat good inside it!" parped Porky. So they bobbed down on either side of the gangplank.

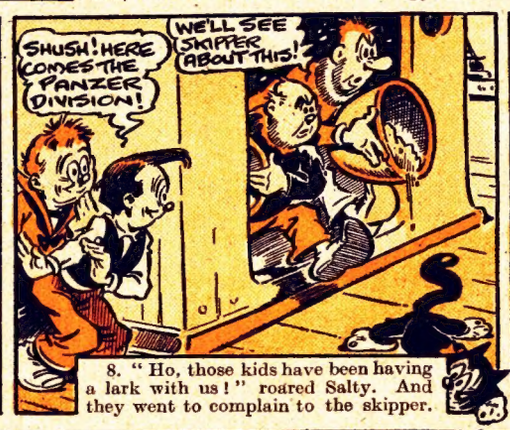


4. The Easter egg shot across it in fine style. No such luck for the kids, though. The plank rose up and hit 'em!

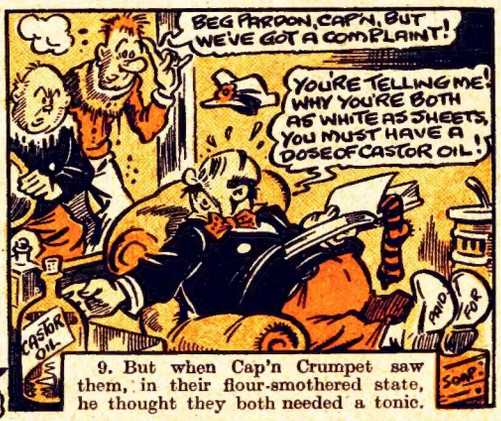
5. 'Cos the mates pushed it up like a drawbridge. Down went the kids in a dizz, while the mates went for the egg.

6. They were anxious to see what was inside. So they started a tug-o'-war with it.

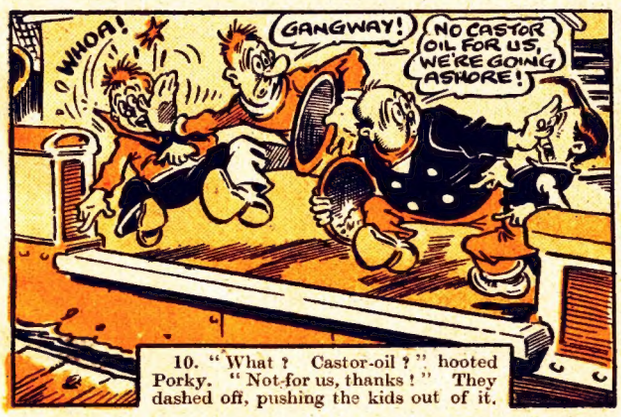
7. In a brace of split jiffies, that egg became unhitched at the seams, and down went the mates, covered in flour!



8. "Ho, those kids have been having a lark with us!" roared Salty. And they went to complain to the skipper.


BEG PARDON, CAP'N, BUT WE'VE GOT A COMPLAINT!
YOU'RE TELLING ME! WHY YOU'RE BOTH AS WHITE AS SHEETS, YOU MUST HAVE A DOSE OF CASTOR OIL!
CASTOR OIL
PAID FOR

9. But when Cap'n Crumpet saw them, in their flour-smothered state, he thought they both needed a tonic.



10. "What? Castor-oil?" hooted Porky. "Not for us, thanks!" They dashed off, pushing the kids out of it.

11. But the mates were so anxious to get off the ship that they forgot the missing gangplank. Into the briny they went, and the kids had grand fun!

Rover Joe

An Englishman in Texas.

CALMLY at ease, Rover Joe sat with his back to a shady wall in Red Dog, while Sleepy dozed close by. He felt lazy himself for once, and too comfortable to move.

And Rover Joe was just dropping gently off into slumber when a one-horse buggy came creaking into Red Dog.

Two men occupied the buggy seat. One, the driver, was a beefy, unshaven Westerner, but his passenger brought a gleam of interest into Joe's sleepy eye at once.

For the passenger was an elderly, pleasant-looking man, neatly clad in a light tweed suit. On his head perched a trim felt hat of the style that could only have been made in England.

And as the dusty buggy halted, not many yards from where Joe sat, rough words issued from the driver's ugly mouth.

"Waal, Mr. Englishman, here we are!" he announced in a strong Northern twang. "And here we blame well stop, too, if you don't act sensible! I don't care what you say, by, but if you want me to drive you on to Lone Prairie I want another hundred dollars!"

The elderly Englishman remained calm.

"My man, you are trying to swindle me," he stated quietly. "When I engaged you at Laredo Junction you agreed to guide and drive me to this place, Lone Prairie, for a fee of one hundred dollars. I have kept my bargain. Now you will kindly keep yours!"

"Oh, will I?" sneared the driver. "Waal now, here you are, stuck down in this dingbole landed, so what are you goin' to do about it, greenhorn? I want another hundred bucks to complete the purchase! And don't glimme any backchat, either, or——"

Meaningly he tapped his gun-butt.

And then Rover Joe got up and strolled round behind the buggy. He reached up and grabbed the driver's ankle with a grasp of steel.

"Off!" drawled Joe. And the astonished bully did come off, yanked neck and crop. With a howl, he scrambled up again, snatching savagely at his gun.

Whereupon Rover Joe punched him smack on the jaw, very hard indeed.

"And that's that, I think," he yawned as the ruffian fell down again and slumbered. "Good-afternoon, sir! You seem to have picked a wrong 'un! Can I help you out of yore troubles any way?"

"I am much obliged to you indeed," smiled the stranger. "My name is Bassett—Howard Bassett, of London, England—and I wish to be driven to Lone Prairie, Texas, to find a young man named John Bassett!"

"Dig that!" grinned Joe. "And what has this John Bassett done to bring you all the way from England, sir?"

"Why, nothing that I know!" rejoined Mr. Bassett mildly. "He just happens to be my nephew, whom I have never set eyes on. Also, he is my only living relative now."

Mr. Bassett's quiet but shrewd eyes measured Rover Joe.

"Yes, you look like a good chap," he went on kindly. "and it is a little tired of dealing with ruffians and rogues in this Wild West of yours. If I am to make my acquaintance, so there shall be no more—er—misunderstandings.

"My name you know, and I may add that I am fairly wealthy. Young John Bassett is the son of my only brother, who came to America thirty years ago, settled here, and died last year. Now that John is my only kinsman I want to adopt him. I retired from business six months ago, a lonely man, so I thought I would see something of the world and find my nephew at the same time.

"I wrote to John, who, I understand, has lived in Texas all his life and runs a small farm or ranch on Lone Prairie. I told him I wished to see him on his own land, and he wrote back—after a time—to say how pleased he would be. He also told me that the nearest railway town to here was Laredo Junction. From there, he said, I could hire a guide to drive me out to his ranch.

"I see," nodded Joe. "I s'pose young John couldn't meet you himself 'cos he didn't know exactly when you'd arrive."

"That is so, and I did not expect John to meet me," agreed Mr. Bassett. "Instead, I hired this ruffian, who offered me his services in Laredo. I did not like him, but there seemed to be no one else. The rest you know for yourself! Meanwhile, I seem to be stranded here. Now, I say, Mr. Rover Joe, is it?—would you drive me to Lone Prairie for a fee of one hundred dollars?"

"No, I won't, sir," said Joe. "But I'll guide you there for nothing, and you can consider that you've got to do is hold th' reins and let that crowbait buggy hoss pull you. But get some grub first, 'cos I know you're eatin' I'll get rid of this crook!"

This he did easily enough by dragging the fellow out into the street to the first empty shack. Joe pitched him inside, wedged the door shut, then ambled along to the eating-house Mr. Bassett was already hungrily eating bacon and beans. Joe beckoned the drowsy storekeeper to come out.

"Lone Prairie—that's about ten miles north o' here, ain't it?" began Joe. "D'you know a John Bassett who lives up there?"

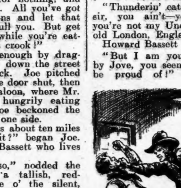
"Yeah, I reckon so," nodded the storekeeper. "A stalish, quiet, red-haired youngster, one o' the silent, hard-working kind. He moved up here from South Texas about a year ago to start a small outfit. He only comes in here once a month for grub, so that's all I do know about him. What are you aimin' to do about that coy-otey from Laredo who you slung into Sam Sheriff's old shack just now?"

"Why, nothing, pardner!" Joe replied blandly. "When he wakes up tell him to stay still 'r some Injun'll scalp him. Mebbe he won't stay."

The little farmer joined Mr. Bassett in a cup of coffee, and an hour later the two started out for Lone Prairie and young John's ranch.

Already there were very good friends, and Joe whiled the time away cheerily until they reached the rugged line of hills where Lone Prairie lay.

And there, with alarming suddenness, the peaceful journey ended. A rifle shot, a yell, a bullet smashed Mr. Bassett's English hat leapt giddily off his head!



Tiger-swift, Joe lunged at him and knocked him spinning.

Dark Deeds!

"H-A-NDS up, there!" rasped a voice next instant. "Wave 'em high, bo', or you'll got th' works!"

Joe's hands shot skywards; there was nothing else for it as three grim men rode out of cover to surround and disarm him. They wore black flannel shirts and thick navvy "chaps," and leggings. And they spoke, Joe noticed, with the same hard Northern twang as the driver from Laredo Junction.

"This is a hold-up, range-tramp, so take it easy and mebbe you won't git hurt," twanged one. "As for the old gent in the natty suit, he looks like a pilgrim with a fine, fat pocket-book! Hand it over smart now, and any other valuables you've got, or——"

Rover Joe spoke gladly.

But then, of a sudden, his eyes lifted and widened in a stare of utter amazement. For the last person Joe had expected to see in that lonely region just then was—rescuer!

Nevertheless, a rescuer was certainly dashing to Mr. Bassett's aid now as fast as a fine sturdy cow-pony could cover the ground!

He was a tall, red-haired young man, who carried a rifle in his fairly steady hand and carried a gun in each gloved hand. A piercing whoop escaped him—then the bullets began to fly.

Three bold bandits made no attempt to fight! With a yelp of alarm, their leader began a full-speed retreat, followed hastily by the others. They left Mr. Bassett alone, but they took Joe's guns.

And the last the furious little adventurer saw of them the three were dashing safely into the shelter of a belt of trees just as the red-haired rescuer pulled up.

"Say, are yew all right, sir?" he cried. "Looks like I was jest in time, but!"

A fine, dashing youth he looked then, with his black sombrero perched at a rakish angle, a purple silk scarf round his neck, and those white "woolly" chaps of his. His gun-holsters were slung low on his thighs, the leather inlaid by Indian bead-work.

And Mr. Bassett, staring hard at the young man, suddenly smiled back.

"Tell me, young man," said the elderly Englishman quietly, "does your name happen to be John Bassett, of Lone Prairie?"

A look of great surprise crossed the young redhead's face.

"Thunderin' cats!" he cried. "Say, sir, you ain't—you can't be—surely you're not my Uncle Howard from th' old country, Bassett?"

Howard Bassett laughed happily.

"But I am your uncle, John—and, by Jove, you seem to be a nephew to be proud of!" he cried heartily, grasping the card-table on the second man, then dived at the third.

"Hold me up, will you? Then you hold that!" snorted Joe, banging away like billy-o. He flattened a man's nose with his boot-heel, and when he sprang up again he captured gun gleamed in his fist. He was only just in time. Cursing wildly, the third bandit was aiming to shoot him.

But Joe's gun flashed a split second too quickly, and the fellow collapsed with a bullet in his arm. The others were already unconscious. Joe could hit hard when he liked.

Nor did he waste any time attending to the bandits' hurts. He lighted a candle, gazed keenly round the untidy shack, then made an excited chuckle. There was a trapdoor let into the floor. Joe yanked it open, held the candle down, then dropped down into the shallow, dark cellar built underneath the cabin.

"Ah, yo' I reckoned I'd find you here!" he remarked next moment.

It was a man Joe found then and dragged out—a young man who raged feebly the instant the little adventurer cut his bonds and removed the gag from his mouth.

But Joe was still in a hurry, it seemed. Leaving the fallen bandits, he had propped their unconscious aside, then saddled one of their horses.

And one hour later Rover Joe strode swiftly and silently into the little ranch-house belonging to John Bassett.

Young John and his uncle were having supper when Joe came in, but the first glimpse of him standing there brought a sinister change in the nephew. With an oath, he leapt for his gunbelt on the table.

But against Rover Joe's speed he had no chance at all. Tiger-swift, the little roamer lunged at him, knocked the young rancher spinning over a chair, then pinned him down.

"Great heavens!" Mr. Bassett stood aghast. "It's you again—Rover Joe! How dare you treat my nephew like that?"

"Because he ain't your nephew, sir!" snorted Joe. "I dunno who he is, but he's a crook in league with them black-shirted bandits who held you up to-day. He's a fake hold-up, anyway, stagg so that you'd think your nephew was a real daisy! Now to be proud o'. Your real nephew is——"

Hey, John!"

For sure, another tallish red-haired youth limped into the room.

"I'm John Bassett, Uncle Howard—the real one!" said the youth who had saved. "This crook is Harry Lewis, alias Montana Red. He and his gang have been terrorising the Lone Prairie for some time. I reckon they heard about you, my rich English uncle, and—and—" the youth ceased. All you knew about me was that I was tall and had red hair, I guess. So this fake was posing as me, while Montana Red took my place. Then he'd have robbed and swindled you good and fine, once he'd won yore confidence, the dern coy-otey!"

"Great Scott!" cried Mr. Bassett. "I now on earth did you see through this villainous trick, Rover Joe?"

"Aw, shucks, it smelt fishy all along!" grinned Joe, good humour restored. "First off, them three bandits ran away too quickly from one man! Secondly, even fake nephew made some mistakes. Your real nephew, I remembered, was a Texan born. Yet he'd down here, and you don't twang through their noses, Northern style. And they don't call a prairie jake a coyote, neither!

"Texans call 'em 'coy-o-teye,' like John has just done. Also, Texas is a hot place, and cowpunchers don't wear thick, heavy chaps made of Angora sheepskins! They only wear 'em when they go to cold States like Montana, where the weather is cold and the thorny scrub would tear leather clothes to bits in no time through. Mr. Bassett, here's your real nephew all right; and, John, here's your rich uncle. Now I want to collect a sheriff's posse to round up this Montana Red and three busted-down bandits and that bugey-driving pal o' theirs I left back in Red Dog."

(Another grand Rover Joe story in next Friday week's number.)

TORPEDO POWER

A breath-taking yarn of war in the Far East.

Borneo Fugitive.

"HERE he comes, lads! Give him all you've got!"

Lieutenant Nat Sparke stood alertly on the bridge of the fast motor-boat Skeeter, which was weaving patterns at high speed on the blue sea. His eyes were fixed on a Japanese dive-bomber dropping like a stone out of the sky.

A stick of four bombs exploded in the water, throwing up columns of foam. But already Petty Officer "Dusty" Miller and other ratings manning the anti-aircraft guns had sent a thunderous hail of bullets and fiery tracers into the plane as it had flattened out, and the machine turned sharply with smoke pouring from it.

Sub-Lieutenant Ted Midgley had flicked the wheel hard a-port, and the Skeeter sped towards the jungle-covered Borneo coast. A rain of brine slashed down on the decks, and then the stricken aeroplane blew up in mid-air and a more dangerous shower of metal spattered the sea. Two fragments of the destroyed plane struck the drum-like petrol-tank shaft the Skeeter's bridge. A chunk of aluminium thumped through an open hatch and crashed into the motor-engine. There followed a flash of blue flame, and the hum of the engine died out and the boat rapidly lost way.

"Well, mates," grunted Dusty, "we 'got' the yellow monkey, but it'll be a long time before we get back to the Batam base."

For once, Dusty's doleful forebodings appeared to be justified. The Skeeter's reserve of petrol had drained from the damaged tank into the sea, and the motor was out of action in any case. Unfortunately, too, Artificer McCree and a couple of mechanics had received injuries which would prevent them from undertaking any duties for several days.

Pink and white coral showed on the bed of the crystal-clear sea, and Nat ordered the bowmen to stand by the anchor.

"Let go!"

The command had hardly left his lips when the anchor splashed overboard and the chain ran out with a clatter. The Skeeter slewed round and brought up in less than a fathom of water.

"Well, here we are, sir," remarked Dusty, with glum satisfaction. After Nat had been to examine the casualties. "Things ain't so rosy."

"For once you're right, my cheery old croaker," Nat answered. "Our patrol has come to a full stop. We can't drift any out on the tide—that's setting shoreward."

"It's high water in a couple of hours, sir," remarked Midgley. "We could drift seaward on the ebb, and signal Batam for a tow."

"Maybe that's our best chance," Nat agreed, "though the radio is apt to attract Jap patrol-boats and planes."

"Those planes are stiff 'uns," the yellow heathen," grunted Dusty. "I wouldn't wonder if some of 'em have heard the gunfire and are on their way eastward now. They're like blinkin' monkeys for getting through the jungle."

But Nat quickly made a plan for guarding the Skeeter against surprise until nightfall. He himself waded ashore with a well-armed landing party consisting of Dusty and eight ratings. Midge was left in charge of the boat together with the rest of the crew.

Once ashore, Nat divided his squad into two sections. He took charge of one party, and Dusty was sent with the other over to higher ground on the left side of the beach. Thus, if any Japanese came through the jungle to make a direct attack on the anchored Skeeter they would be subjected to a cross-fire from the two strong-points.

Dusty's section had been settled less than five minutes when an outpost a few yards ahead gave a breathless warning.

"Someone's coming, petty officer!"

All crouched tensely under cover with rifles, tommy-guns and revolvers at the ready. Unsteady footsteps sounded louder, mingled with the crackling and swishing of grass. Then suddenly the bushes parted, and a man stepped into the open.

Dusty Miller and his shipmates gazed at the stranger wide-eyed and open-mouthed. They had never seen the like of him before!

"Cor! Drowned me in a dry-dock!" gurgled a Cockney A.B. "The bloke's brought 'is shrimpin'-nets. He must think it's Margate!"

The stranger was tall and lean, with a faint suggestion of a silky moustache above his mouth. A pair of sun-helmet with neck-flap was set on his head; his tunic, shorts and gaiters were all of khaki drill and of the same sickly green colour. A pair of smoked horn-rimmed glasses covered his eyes, and he was loaded like the proverbial Christmas tree.

Among his equipment were some thin rods of polished wood, a pair of field-glasses in a leathern case, two or three green muslin nets of various sizes on bamboo sticks, and a useful umbrella of the kind commonly seen on the golf course. As he stood there he unfurled the umbrella to reveal its glory of red, green and yellow, and held it up for a sunshade.

Dusty and several hard, then rose and stepped forward.

"Dr. Livingstone, I presoom?" he growled.

The newcomer evinced no surprise at seeing him or the other British bluejackets as they stood up.

"Guess you're barking up the wrong gum-tree, brother Stanley," he smiled. "My name's Zymran, a saungkel, so s'pose the 'Z' stands for Zebra or Zero?"

Dusty's second appellation is Zenophon, brother," the American answered. "Such was the name awarded me by my respected dam, a professor at Oskawassa University, where I graduated. For the last three years," he volunteered, "I have been collecting lepidopterans and coleoptera in the Borneo wilds."

Neither of the bluejackets knew what he was talking about. It was the fact that he had been so long in Borneo, and remained unharmed, that astonished them.

"Three years!" exclaimed Dusty. "Spike me, then you were here afore the war?"

Aloysius Z. Pyman raised his eyebrows.

"What war?" he asked.

Dusty drew a deep breath. He realised now that Alcysius Z. Pyman, engrossed on an expedition in the Borneo wilds, had remained blissfully unaware that war had broken out in 1939, and that the United States was now involved with Japan. So he broke the news with grim relish.

"Well, you've sure handed me a surprise-packet, sailor!" Pyman exclaimed. "I guess this accounts for the bunch of Japs who've been trailing me. It licked me to a frazzle why so many of them should be beating around in Borneo, right to the teeth. There was an advanced party of about fifty of the rattlers, and a larger mob of five hundred or so miles behind."

"And they're headin' this way?" Dusty exploded.

"Unless, sailor?" the American whispered tensely. "Sounds like that first bunch of Japs are coming now. We'd better get aboard that boat of yours, and beat it for a safe port."

"Beat it!" echoed Dusty. "The Skeeter's crocked, mister. I tell you—and the motor's busted. There's less than twenty of us, and over five hundred Jap monkeys are steering this way. It ought to be a good scrap—while it lasts!"

The bluejackets poured a hail of bullets.

Pyman Pulls a Fast One!

By wagging his hands, Dusty somehow phoned a warning to Lieutenant Nat Sparke, and then went to cover. Within five minutes ugly Japanese faces began to peer through the jungle.

A squat, arrogant officer mustered the party, and struggled forward for a better view of the British boat which he intended to attack by surprise. He smiled grimly at the prospect of the slaughter that his men would wreak on the unsuspecting British crew. But the yell of triumph on his face as a revolver shot rang out, and he sprawled headlong among the grass with a bullet-hole in his heart!

Nat had judged the moment to a nicety to spring the trap on the would-be trappers. It was a dead shot, and so were Dusty and the other highly trained ratings lying in ambush. And directly their commander-in-chief had fired the bluejackets poured a lashing hail of bullets from tommy-guns, rifles and revolvers against the Japanese.

"Charge!" shouted Nat. "Give 'em your grenades—and the steel!"

The astounded Japs—those who were left of them—leaped up with squeals of terror at the sight of the bluejackets charging. Revolvers flamed and bayonets flashed, and before that hurricane onslaught the Japs scurried screeching into the green jungle.

Victory achieved, Nat recalled the bluejackets and assembled the entire party near the beach, where he met Alcysius Z. Pyman, whom Dusty introduced as "the professor as didn't know there's a war on." Having learnt of the latest Japanese force heading towards the coast, he grimly remarked that any attack must be held until after nightfall. It must be shelter might have a chance to drift off on the ebb tide.

"Say, lootenant," Pyman protested. "I'm mighty anxious to get all my valuable entomological lepidoptera and coleoptera to a port of safety. Haven't you any power at all in that pesky boat?"

"Alas, professor," Dusty interposed. "There's plenty o' power in the torpedo we've got in one o' the bow-tubes. It's got legs, wings, and maybe you'd like a ride on it?"

"Then it's all hunky-dory," exclaimed Pyman. "What's wrong with hitching the boat to the torpedo and getting a tow out to sea?"

"Jove! That's a brain-wave!" Nat chuckled. "We might possibly use the torpedo's power."

Turning to Dusty, he rapidly explained the best way for fixing the torpedo with its warhead removed to avoid any possibility of an explosion. This was to hitch it under the Skeeter's keel, and adjust an electric battery and wire so that the torpedo's powerful little compressed-air engine could be operated from the M.T.B.'s deck.

"A snappy idea!" grinned Midge. "Why didn't I think of it myself?"

His own duty was to stand by the guns, but a few bluejackets were available to help with the scheme.

The torpedo was set for easy buoyancy, outfitted with a special battery and wire, and glided from the tube into the sea. Pyman and the bluejackets jumped over-board into the shallows and grappled with it as it floated about thirty inches below the surface.

Time and again, the tide swung the torpedo awkwardly, and Pyman and the ratings pressed against the smooth sides in the effort to get it lengthways with the keel.

"Okay! Take up the slack on the wires, brother!" panted Pyman, addressing the petty officer. "Say, get a hustle on! It's interesting that I transport my entomological lepidoptera and coleoptera to the museum of Oskawassa University without undue procrastination. So get cracking!"

"You'll get cracking that jawbone o' yours in a jiffy," Dusty retorted Dusty.

The mooring-wires reeved under the Skeeter's hull were tightened to the bollards on deck to hold the torpedo in position. Then, at Midge's suggestion, two stout hawsers were added to help take the strain when the compressed-air engine of the "steel fish" was set running.

The signal was made to Nat, who was standing on the bridge of the boat. Alcysius Pyman scrambled aboard and gazed through his field-glasses at a point where Midge thought he saw movement.

"Yeah, here they come!" the American grunted. "Fifteen strong, the whole swarm of dirty yellow skunks."

Directly Nat and the shore party were aboard the anchor was weighed, and Alcysius Z. Pyman—the author of the brilliant power scheme—was permitted the honour of starting up the torpedo's compressed-air engine.

"Stand by!" warned Nat, taking his place on the bridge. "All clear? Then let her run, professor!"

The Japanese, who had gained points farther along the coast, opened fire with machine-guns and tommy-guns. But the bullets fell short, although some small shells burst near.

The excited American pressed the switch of the control-gear, and immediately set the torpedo's powerful little engine and propeller running. The nose of the Skeeter was headed to the open sea. But then the entire crew chorussed in dismay. Instead of dragging the boat, the swiftly began to gather way backward!

"Heck!" gulped Pyman. "My f-fault, I guess!"

One thing was certain: the torpedo, manipulated with difficulty under water, had been lashed to the keel the wrong way round!

"G-good-night!" groaned Dusty, his eyes bulging like the setting sun. "Here's where we go aground, mates!"

But the boat slewed rapidly under Nat's expert control, and "full-speed-and-go!" then suddenly a mighty cheer rose from the crew, for the Skeeter crashed the surf with barely an inch to spare, and moved swiftly stern-first out to the open sea!

Shots dashed harmlessly in the water. The torpedo by its powerful little engine took the M.T.B. for three miles from the Borneo coast, whilst the tropic twilight dissolved into darkness. When the compressed-air had been used up the Skeeter knew well out of range of the Jap guns, and drifted farther on the outgoing tide. Then, at last, light of day was taken in tow by an American gunboat and brought up safely at the Allies' naval base at Batam.

"Well, thanks a million, fellows," smiled Alcysius Z. Pyman when he took leave of the Skeeter's crew. "A great service has been rendered to mankind in the salvation of my unique collection of entomological lepidoptera and coleoptera from the Borneo hinterland."

"Here, what are these leppy-dopa an' colly-wops you've been collecting, professor?" Dusty inquired.

Pyman opened one of the thin polished cases and let him peer in.

"Gorgh! Sufferin' catfish!" gurgled Dusty in disgust. "Why, they're only blinkin' butterflies and beetles!"

(Another thrilling war story in our next number, on sale Friday week.)

11-4-42

WADDLES THE WASTER
WINS BY A BALD HEAD!
THIS OUGHT TO FETCH 'EM, SIR!
RIGGOLES
TRY OOR EASTER EGGS
IT'S ABOUT TIME YOU POPPED OUT TO SEE HOW THESE EASTER EGGS ARE GOING. WADDLES!
YESSIR
COSRIC! THEY'RE GOING ALL RIGHT!
THANKS I'VE TRIED HALF-A DOZEN WITH 'EM
CATCH SLIM JIM OR YOU'RE SACKED!
THE OUR EASTER EGGS
SLIM JIM
SLIMMEST BEFORE MORNIN'
NO ONE ABOUT! I'LL TRY SOME MORE!
GOT YOU!
CO-EE!
THERE'S A REWARD FOR HIM, WADDLES, AND YOU'VE CLICKED FOR IT!

The Easter eggs were not going at all well until Slim Jim sampled a few on the cheap. So Waddles used his loaf and soon popped up all smiles again.

PLUM AND DUFF, THE BOYS OF THE BOLD BRIGADE!

1. "You're on a nice Easter gift if you pop down to the post office for two packages for me!" Bogey told the boys. But Sergy overheard.

2. "You leave those packages to me!" he said, booting them heartily. "Get busy and scrub the asphalte clean for the Easter parade."

3. "Well, of all the cheek!" wailed Plum as he started mopping up operations. "Oh, and he'll get the gift instead of us," exploded Duff.

4. Still, there it was, and they slogged away till the job was done. As they toddled off to return brushes and buckets, Sergy came back.

5. He'd got the packages all right. And he had the cheek to tell our heroes to go over to the sergeants' mess and give that a clean up as well.

6. So the boys looked like having a busy time of it. Then Sergy stepped on the soap and did a wild slither. The packets shot up in the air.

7. One came down and smashed on Bogey's nut. It was full of new laid hen-fruit which busted all over him. Duff caught the other.

8. It was filled with chocolate Easter eggs to their great delight. Bogey wasn't anything like so pleased, however. "You chump!" he cried.

9. Meaning Sergy, of course. And the stripey one was ordered to get busy and clean up all the mess. So the boys looked on and waded in!

1. I made a point of getting up early on Easter Monday, so as to make sure of getting a leave pass. You see, our orders were "first come first served."

2. But when old Lena saw that I had beaten her to it, she was most frightfully annoyed. "You take a back seat!" she hooted. "Hold that!"

3. Having pushed me out of the w my place in the queue and unfolded "Now I can sit here and take it easy

COMIC CUTS—
KING OF COMICS.

WADDLES THE WARTIER

WINS BY A BALD HEAD!
THIS OUGHT TO FETCH 'EM, SIR!
RIGGOLES
THEY OOAH EASTER EGGS
IT'S ABOUT TIME YOU POPPED OUT TO SEE HOW THESE EASTER EGGS ARE GOING.
YESSIR
WADDLES
COMING! THEY'RE GOING ALL RIGHT!
THANKS I'VE TRIED HALF-A DOZEN
CATCH SLIM JIM OR YOU'RE SACKED!
TRY SOME EASTER EGGS
NO ONE ABOUT! I'LL TRY SOME MORE!
GOT YOU!
DO-EH!
THERE'S A REWARD FOR HIM, WADDLES, AND YOU'VE CLICKED FOR IT!

The Easter eggs were not going at all well until Slim Jim sampled a few on the cheap. So Waddles used his loaf and soon popped up all smiles again.

QUIP And CRANKY

YOUR PAL WALDY BLOGGS SAYS HE'S GOING TO THE CAS EMPIRE FANCY DRESS BALL!
YESSIR!
WELL!
BUT HOW CAN HE GO AS A PRUNE IF HE'S GOT A STOMACH LIKE THAT?
OH, HE'LL GET ROUND THAT, SIR!
HOW?
WELL, HE'S BOUGHT A TIN OF TREACLE AND HE'S GOING TO PAINT IT OVER HIS BALD HEAD!
AND GO AS A TOFFEE APPLE!
I'VE HEARD YOU'VE INVENTED A PILLOW FOR FIRE-FLUFF FIGHTERS!
HORSE-FEATHERS!
27 Foot Beam

P.C. PENNY
Our Fortnight Copper

MAKES A STRIKING ARREST!
THERE'S AN EASTER EGG SWINDLER AT LARGE. GO AND PULL HIM IN!
O.K. CHIEF!
THIS LOOKS FISHY. I'LL BUY IT!
HERE Y'ARE! GRAND SURPRISE EASTER EGG! THE LAST ONE. HALF A CROWN!
HOR-HOR! SO HOW'S THAT FOR A SURPRISE?
AND THIS'LL BE SURPRISE NUMBER TWO!
AND THAT WILL BE
HA-HA! HERE'S MONEY!
SURPRISE NUMBER THREE!
AND NOW COME AND SPILL YOUR STORY!

Our bright bobby got the surprise all right when he opened the dud Easter egg. However, he sprang a neat one on the swindler which ended in a knockout.

PLUM AND DUFF, THE BOYS OF THE BOLD BRIGADE!

FETCH TWO PACKAGES FROM THE POST OFFICE AND YOU SHALL HAVE A NICE EASTER GIFT!
I'LL FETCH THE PACKAGES, YOU SCRUB THIS ASPHALTE CLEAN FOR EASTER PARADE!
THE OLD TWISTER!
NOW WE'LL SNEAK OUR EASTER GIFT!
THAT'S CLEAN ENOUGH FOR ANY OLD PARADE!
GET US!
NOW YOU CAN GO AND CLEAN UP SERGEANT'S MESS, SEE!
EGGS IN THE MESS
EGGS IN THE MESS
NOW SERGY'S CLEANING UP HIS OWN MESS!
WELL FIELDED, CHUM!
COO! LOOK! THESE ARE CHOCOLATE EGGS!
CHUMP! YOU CAN SET ABOUT CLEANING UP THIS MESS!
AND DO THE JOB PROPERLY, TOO!

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BIG BEN AND LITTLE LEN, THE LARKY LADS!

HOW CAN WE GET ACROSS THIS STREAM, BOYS?
I KNOW! — WE'LL VAULT ACROSS WITH THE TENT-POLE!
I'M OVER! YOU'LL NEXT PA!
COMING OVER!
OVER!
CHUMP! YOU'VE LEFT THE POLE IN THE MIDDLE!
BAH! HOW CAN WE KEEP THE TENT UP WITHOUT A POLE?
HALF A MO' THIS WILL MAKE IT STAND UP STIFF!
STARCH
STARCH
GOOD FOR YOU, NOW HOP IT! THERE'S ONLY ROOM FOR ME AND PA!
I'M LEFT OUT IN THE COLD EH!

1. Pa and the lads went hiking at Easter, all they could afford. But when they reached the camping ground, a wide stream barred the way.

2. So Pa was worried as to how to get over it. "Like this, Pop!" tootled Ben, and digging the tent pole in the river bed, he hopped across.

3. Then Pa followed, which only left Len to come. Having buzzed the luggage across to the opposite bank, he grabbed the pole and then—

4. Swished across the same as the others had done. But he forgot to bring the pole. "Chump!" snorted Ben. "Now we can't reach it!"

5. That was true, and the pole had to remain put. So Pa and Ben had to erect the tent as best they could without it. Some job it was!

6. However, they managed to get it up, and then Len had a brain-wave. Helping himself to the pail of starch, he buzzed it over the tent.

7. "That'll make it stand up stiff, Pa," he piped. "Yes, but even so, there's only enough room for two!" yapped Ben. "You hop it!"

8. And he booted Len out of it. But he had no intention of being left out in the cold. So when they turned in, Len cut round the tent.

9. And the top piece which he cut away was just what he wanted—a cosy shake-down for one. So Pa and Ben had to spend a cold night!

BIG-HEARTED MARTHA
Our A.R.P. nut

OH BOY! WE'RE FIRST IN THE LINE!
QUEUE UP HERE FOR EGGS! LEAVE PARCELS
QUEUE UP HERE FOR EGGS! LEAVE PARCELS
GET BACK, FATTY, I'M GOING TO BE FIRST IN THE QUEUE!
QUEUE UP HERE FOR EASTER EGGS! LEAVE PARCELS
OLD SKINNY LIZ IS GOING TO GET A SHOCK!
THERE! I'LL PLONK MY PARCEL ON MY CAMP-STOOL AND WAIT!
HERE'S WHERE I'LL FEEL THE PINCH!
AH! I'LL GIVE YOU A PINCH A TICKLE LENA! JUST TWICE A SQUINT!
QUEUE UP HERE FOR EGGS! LEAVE PARCELS
THERE'S A HAND IN THE PIE!
TO THE CLINK, YOU! COME TO THE FAIR TIM
TO THE EASTER EGGING PARTY (UNDERWORLD)

1. I made a point of getting up early on Easter Monday, so as to make sure of getting a leave pass. You see, our orders were "first come first served."

2. But when old Lena saw that I had beaten her to it, she was most frightfully annoyed. "You take a back seat!" she hooted. "Hold that!"

3. Having pushed me out of the way, Lena took my place in the queue and unfolded her camp-stool. "Now I can sit here and take it easy," she thought.

4. But I did not mean to take things lying down. Oh, no! Quickly borrowing a handy clothes line, I neatly lassoed Lena's stool, just as she sat on it.

5. "Ha, ha! This is where you feel the pinch," I tittered. "That'll teach you not to pinch my place, old dear!" Then our commandant looked out—

6. And as she got her face lifted by old Lena, she soon put a stop to her holiday leave. So I got my pass first, after all, chums.—MARTHA. 11-4-42

CUTS—
COMICS.

And
ARKY
HOLDY BLOGG'S GOING TO THE DRESS FANCY
YESSIR!
OH, HE'LL GET ROUND THAT, SIR!
WELL, HE'S BOUGHT A SUIT OF TREACLE AND IS GOING TO TOUR IT OVER HIS BALD HEAD
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THIS LOOKS FISHY, I'LL BUY IT!
HERE Y'ARE! GRAND SURPRISE EASTER EGG! YOU HAVE THE LAST ONE, HALF A CROWN!
HOR-HOR! HOWS THAT FOR A SURPRISE?
AND THIS'LL BE SURPRISE NUMBER TWO!
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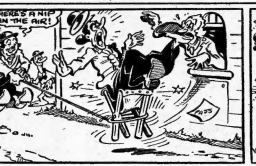

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Kenton Steel's Easter Case.

NIGHT RAIDERS!

An Interrupted Walk.

IT was the Saturday evening before Easter, and Kenton Steel had taken his young assistant, Nutty Brown, to the pictures. By the time the programme finished it was just past ten o'clock.

"Quite a good show, Nutty," was Steel's verdict as they reached the street. "The big film was the most exciting I've seen for a long time. And as it's a fine, dry night, I shall enjoy the walk home, after sitting for a good three hours."

"Same here," said Nutty.

They set off at a brisk pace, and before long had seen the last of the other people who had come out with them. The night was dark, but the clear sky was spangled with stars, and walking was indeed pleasant.

Presently they turned into a quiet road in which were several shops, all of them long since closed, of course. All except one, that is to say.

That one was at the far end of the row. A motor lorry was drawn up outside it, and was being loaded from the shop with boxes and crates.

Reaching the scene, Steel was almost bowled over by a man who emerged from the shop with a box in his arms.

"Sorry, sir," he apologised hastily. "Didn't see you in the dark."

"That's all right," replied Steel with a smile. "Working late, eh?"

"Yes, that's right," agreed the other, as he dumped the box in the back of the lorry. "We've had orders to run a lot of stuff over to our other branch."

"I see," nodded Steel, his alert eyes roving round the shop interior.

The place was effectively blacked out, but someone in the shop was working by the light of a hand torch. The man, whom Steel could just vaguely make out in the gloom, suddenly called out.

"What's up, Jerry?" he cried. "Anything wrong?"

"No, Lefty," was the reply of the man on the pavement. "Only apologising to a gent passing—I nearly bumped him over."

"Come on, then, and get busy," came from the shop. "The sooner we get this lot on board the better."

Thus admonished, the man called Jerry hurried back into the shop. Steel captained on his way with Nutty. There was a very thoughtful frown on the crime-smasher's brow.

"I seem to recognise that voice, Nutty," he suddenly blurted out when they reached the corner. "The voice of the man in the shop, working with the torch."

"Oh, you mean the chap called Lefty, chief," replied Nutty.

"Yes. Some time ago I had the pleasure of rounding up a thief named Lefty Ryder," Steel went on. "And the voice of that chap in the shop was remarkably like his."

"Well, perhaps it is Lefty himself," suggested Nutty. "I know what a good memory you've got for voices—and faces, chief."

"I didn't see his face, of course," said Steel. "But I heard his voice, and if that's not Lefty Ryder's—well!"

"Maybe it's Lefty turned over a new leaf and doing honest work," remarked Nutty.

"H'm! From what I know of that gentleman, honest work is the last thing on earth he's likely to try his hand at —or should be a new leaf, either," was Steel's comment.

He pulled up sharply.

"You stay here, Nutty," he went on after a pause. "I'm going back to see if there's anything fishy about this."

With that, Steel made his way back to the door, keeping well in the shadows. He reached the open door and listened intently.

"This'll about fill the van," he heard Lefty remark. "So get it aboard, Jerry, and we'll clear out of it. Don't want to spoil the job by hanging about."

"You're telling me," was Jerry's reply.

That settled it for the listening Steel. He was convinced now that one of the two men was indeed the crook, Lefty Ryder. And he was equally certain that an audacious raid was in progress. Jerry came out of the shop with another case to put in the lorry. Lefty followed, switching off the light of the torch as he reached the shop door, which he pulled to.

And as he did so he felt a vice-like grip close on one wrist.

"Keep quiet, little game, Lefty!" Steel hissed in his ear.

Lefty Ryder gave a violent start.

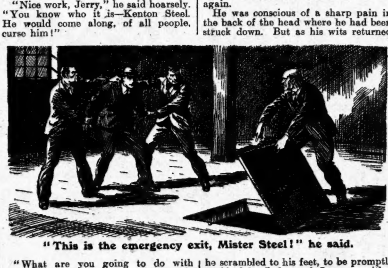
"Kenton Steel!" he gasped.

"You've guessed it," said Steel. "And I've guessed your little game here to-night, Lefty. You're boldly raiding this shop and trying to get away with a lorry-load of stolen goods. But you're going to be unlucky this trip."

"And so are you!" snapped a harsh voice behind Steel.

Then, before the crime smasher could turn or do anything to avert it, something heavy came crashing down on his head, stunning him. He would have fallen to the ground, but Lefty caught him.

"Nice work, Jerry," he said hoarsely. "You know who it is—Kenton Steel. He would come along, of all people, curse him!"



"This is the emergency exit, Mister Steel!" he said.

"What are you going to do with him?" asked Jerry. "Shove him inside the shop and off the way?"

"No, not that," was the reply. "Now he's got on to our lay, he's got to be dealt with. We'll take him along with us and leave him to the boss. Sling him in the lorry."

"Okay," said Jerry.

As unceremoniously as a sack of potatoes, the senseless Steel was slung into the lorry on top of the crates and boxes. Jerry sat beside him, and Lefty mounted into the driver's seat and drove off into the night.

And from the corner came running the white-faced Nutty Brown, who had seen his chief thus kidnapped but had been unable to do anything to help.

Timely Aid.

IT was in the East End of London, close by the river, that the lorry eventually pulled up in a narrow, dark street. All around premises had been damaged by air raids. But most of them had been a big warehouse still remained standing.

The lorry lumbered into the debris-filled yard, and stopped. Jerry and Lefty got down and went round to the back.

"Never mind about unloading just yet—that'll do later," said Lefty. "How's his nibs?"

"Still in the land of dreams," replied Jerry with an evil grin. "I gave him a good cosh while I was about it."

"Good! Then give me a hand with him inside," was Lefty's order.

Between them they lifted the limp form of Kenton Steel from the lorry and disappeared with their burden into the warehouse. It was very dark inside, but both men seemed sure of their whereabouts, and had no difficulty in groping their way.

At last they reached a door, and they dumped Steel on the floor. Lefty gave three quick knocks, and after a pause a key was turned on the inside.

Then the door opened, and an evil-faced, bald-headed man showed up on the threshold.

"Ah, so it's you," he said, recognising the two newcomers. "Got the stuff all right?"

"Yeah, okay," replied Lefty. "And we've got something else as well. Look here!"

He jabbed a foot into Steel's ribs, and the bald-headed man stared down.

"Gosh! It's Kenton Steel!" he exclaimed.

"That's just who it is, boss!" replied Lefty.

With that he explained how Steel came to be there. The fires of hate increased in the eyes of the bald man as he listened.

"You did the right thing to bring him along," he declared. "We don't want Kenton Steel or any other Nosey Parker butting in on our game. Bring him in."

So Steel was carried into the lighted room beyond, and the door was firmly closed, though the boss did not trouble to lock it. All three glared down at the crime-smasher, who presently opened his eyes and came back to life again.

He was conscious of a sharp pain in the back of the head where he had been struck down. But as his wits returned he scrambled to his feet, to be promptly grabbed by Lefty and Jerry on either side of him.

"Good-evening, Mister Steel!" sneered the boss. "We didn't expect to have the pleasure of your company this evening. Sorry to have brought you here against your will. But that's what comes of poking your nose into what doesn't concern you. And now that you are here—"

"Well?" inquired Steel as the bald man broke off.

"We're not going to keep you long," the boss went on. "In fact, you're going to leave us almost immediately. But you're not going out the way you came."

With that, he crossed the room to a trapdoor and grasped the iron ring. A tug, and the trapdoor rose on its hinges.

"This is the emergency exit, Mister Steel," he went on. "It's a short cut to the river which runs underneath. It's high tide, too, so nothing could be better. Perhaps you can hear the lapping of the water. I can!"

"So that's the idea, is it?" replied Steel calmly.

"Yes, that's it," was the leering reply. "Bring him forward, boys, and drop him in."

Lefty and Jerry promptly started to march Steel towards the open trapdoor. The crime-smasher realised that he was in as tight a corner as any he had encountered in his whole career. And he determined not to give in without a struggle.

Suddenly, when but a couple of yards from the open trapdoor, he became galvanised into action. A swift, violent jerk wrenched one arm free from Jerry's grasp, and in the same instant Steel crashed a fist into Lefty's face.

That rogue staggered back with a gasping cry, also releasing his hold. Kenton Steel was free now, but still had three desperate rogues to deal with.

"Get him down!" roared the boss, jumping to the attack.

Already Steel was struggling with Jerry, whilst the dazed Lefty also joined in. The boss settled matters as far as the crime-smasher was concerned, and in a few seconds Steel was borne to the ground with the three on top of him.

By a terrific effort he managed to wriggle himself free, and instantly he started to scramble to his feet. Had it not been for the violent throbbing of his head, he might have succeeded in making the dash for the door which he attempted.

But it was not to be. Even as Steel started to make for the door, one of the trio grasped him firmly by the ankle and jerked him off his feet.

Down went Steel once more, thudding the floor hard with the back of his head. As lights danced before his eyes, his attackers piled on top of him again.

His case seemed hopeless now. All three were scrambling at him, each one place resounded to their vicious oaths.

And then out of the blue came the unexpected.

The piercing blasts of a police-whistle were heard, coming from quite close. The door was hurled open, and there stood Nutty Brown, his eyes blazing.

"Come on!" he cried over his shoulder as he darted into the room.

And hard on his heels raced four burly policemen. The three crooks, getting up off Steel, tried to fight their way out, but they stood no chance.

One by one they were overpowered, getting considerably mauled in the process. And whilst handcuffs were snapped on their wrists, Kenton Steel dazed and shaken, got to his feet and smiled bravely at his young assistant.

"Thank Heaven you came, youngster!" he said fervently. "I never expected to see you here. How did you manage it?"

"I saw you thrown into the lorry outside the shop, and drives away, chief," replied Nutty. "I couldn't do a thing then, and I was too flabbergasted, anyway, for the moment. Then I got over the shock, and as the red tail-light of the lorry was disappearing in the distance, by good fortune an empty taxi came along.

"So I jumped in and we followed the lorry here. Even then I watched events before deciding what to do. I saw them carry you into this warehouse, and I crept up in the dark and listened outside the door. That settled it. Away I scuttled, told the police, and four of them came along with me and waited till I crept up to the door again and gave them the signal. And that's all, chief, I think."

"Well, what with one thing and another, you've had a pretty exciting evening, I'll say," said Steel. "And you've helped me to rope in this gang of thieves and saved my life into the bargain. Not a bad night's work for a young 'un."

The three crooks were soon in safe custody, and for a long time to come they troubled the world no more.

And in spite of the lateness of the hour and the excitement which had been through, Nutty enjoyed a good supper when he and Steel got back, and slept soundly when just as though nothing had happened!

(Another Kenton Steel story in our next number, on sale Friday week.)

CLARENCE CALLING!

My dear Cutlets,—Here's our Grand Easter Number, and you will see, it is packed with seasonable fun and thrills. There is plenty of entertainment, both for you and for others members of the family, and if your pocket has been unable to get a copy, he will enjoy it, too. So don't forget him.

And don't forget to add this copy, when it is finished with, to your salvage collection, along with every other scrap of waste paper you can lay your hands on. The need for this is as great as ever, so carry on with the good work.

Well, I'll be chatting to you all again next Friday week, as usual, so cheer-ho till then!

With all good wishes for Easter.

Your very good friend,

CLARENCE CUTS.

11-4-42

A FAIR COP!

Easy Money!

WITH a long, loud yawn, Sam Sapper sat up and stretched himself. He blinked around him in the groom, then gave a grunt.

"Ah! I remember now!" he mumbled as he scrambled to his feet. "I had to sleep in a barn last night, being dead broke. And now I suppose I'd better clear out of it before anybody comes along and objects to my using the place as a free hotel without permission."

Sam crossed to the door and peered out. Nobody was in sight, so he came forth and made for the nearby road. As he trudged along it his brow was furrowed in deep thought.

"Something's got to be done!" he muttered. "I haven't a bean in the world, and I must get hold of some cash somehow!"

Now Samuel never worried how he got hold of money so long as he did not work for it. The mere thought of work sent a funny feeling through him as though thousands of ants were using his spine as a dirt track.

Sam lived by his wits. Some of his many schemes had landed him a prize. Others had landed him in prison.

"To-day's Easter Monday," he said as he trudged along. "Not that it will be anything of a holiday for me, as I can't enjoy myself without money in my pocket. Let's hope I bump into something good before I'm much older."

But Sam walked for three or four miles without meeting anything else. Nor did a single car come along from which he might have got a welcome lift.

He seemed to be in a particularly deserted and lonely part of the country. In fact, it was not till midday that he heard the first signs of life.

Suddenly the strains of music were borne upon the breeze. Sam pricked up his ears, then gave a grunt.

"Sounds like a fair," he mumbled. "That means I'm getting near a town or a village, anyway."

As he plodded on his way the sound of music came louder. At last Sam came in sight of the fair, its numerous stalls and attractions filling a fairly large field.

There were plenty of people at the fair, out to enjoy themselves for the day. Sam decided to go and join the happy throng, even though he hadn't the price of a swing or a "go" on a roundabout.

But Sam's penniless state did not last long. He was an expert pickpocket, and before he had been at the fair half an hour he had succeeded in easing a dame of her purse.

Unfortunately it only contained one-and-sixpence, which was a bit of a disappointment. But it was better than nothing, and Sam, famished after his long morning walk, treated himself to a piece of cold fried fish and a hunk of bread.

Then he went on the prowl again, looking for more pockets to pick or purses to lift. But there seemed to be nothing doing in that direction; the pockets he dived his nimble fingers into all proving to be empty.

"I seem to be wasting my time here," he growled at last. "I'll be well make my way on to the town which I can see over the treetops. Perhaps I'll have better luck there."

So he started to wend his way towards the exit. But before he reached it he saw a big crowd gathered round one of the stalls. Out of curiosity Sam went up and joined the throng.

The attraction was a big round table divided up into a number of sections, each having a number. Anybody could back his fancy for sixpence a time.

A big arrow hanging horizontally over the table was set in motion by the stout proprietor. The number against which the point of the arrow stopped was the winner. Whoever had backed that number took away all the money on the board except a shilling, which the proprietor kept.

But when the arrow pointed to a blank space which had not been covered

The luckless Sam was pushed along like a wheelbarrow!

the proprietor scooped the pool. In the first few minutes after Sam joined the crowd that happened three times.

"Corks, he's coining money!" muttered Sam. "It's money for jam! I've got a tanner left. I think I'll have a go."

So he risked his last sixpence, and the arrow was set in motion in due course. But not only was Sam not the winner, the arrow stopped once again at an empty, unbacked space. So again the proprietor took all the money.

"Grrh! It's a fraud!" growled Sam crossly. "I believe he works it somehow so that the arrow stops where he wants it to. He ought to be shown up, the crook!"

People started to leave the stall, no doubt as fed-up as Sam with the proprietor's extraordinary run of luck by which he had scooped in best part of a quid in about five minutes.

Sam also walked away, looking sour and salty and thoroughly disgusted with himself. Then, all of a sudden his face brightened and a gleam came into his cunning eyes.

"Coo! I've got a stunning wheeze!" he muttered. "It's a corker! I'll work it right away. I see that there's hardly anybody at the stall."

With that he retraced his steps and went up to the stall proprietor, who was trying a breather while waiting for a fresh crowd to gather.

"Try your luck, sir," he said to Sam. "There'll be more sportsmen along in a minute, and then round goes the old arrow, and you may scoop the pool."

"Yes, I don't think!" said Sam, looking very severe. "I've no chance of scooping the pool, or anybody else, either, and you know it! It's a fraud on the public! So better come along with me quietly to the station."

For some moments the stout man continued to stare at Sam, who expected a fierce outburst. But he did not get one.

"Very good," said the stout man quietly. "If that's how things are, let's go to the police station. I'll get someone to look after the stall while I'm away, and I'll bring the takings along for safety."

"Ah, yes, do that!" said Sam quickly. "Don't run the risk of losing the dough!"

Having put the money in a bag which he placed in his side pocket, the stout man called to another chap to look after his stall and then went quietly along with the artful Sam.

Sam was delighted with his success. Of course, he had no intention whatever of taking the stall proprietor to the police station. He had a very different idea in view.

What that idea was he made plain when the pair of them had gone about half a mile along the country road. Making sure nobody was about, Sam suddenly stopped.

"Look here," he said, "I don't want to be hard on you. After all, you're a hard-working man, going from one show to another week in and week out all the year round. Besides, if mugs like to lose their money on a Bank Holiday—well, let 'em! So if you don't want to be locked up—well, it's up to you!"

"What are you getting at?" asked the other.

"Use your loaf!" retorted Sam with a wink. "Drop me a couple of quid in the palm of my hand while I'm not looking, and you can go back to your stall. I'll continue to take you to the station if I can help it."

"No, I don't suppose you do," was the surprising answer. "But if you're not taking me, I'm taking you! Come on!"

He spoke quietly, but a gleam came into his eye. Sam gazed at him wideeyed, and his knees sagged.

"Here, don't be silly!" he managed to stammer. "You don't seem to understand the position. You—you're under arrest, really, although, as I say, I don't want to make a charge against you as—as it's Easter."

"It makes no difference to me whether it's Easter or half-past six!" was the reply. "I understand you perfectly, and I want you to understand perfectly that I'm taking you to the police-station, and that's where we're going, take it from me. This matter has got to be thrashed right out."

"But—but I don't want to thrash it out," protested Sam, with a feeling that a net was closing round him. "Look here, make it a quid, and we'll say no more about the matter!"

"Come on!" snapped the other.

Looking suddenly fierce, he grasped Sam firmly by the collar and one wrist. Then, heedless of his captive's splutterings and struggles, he steered him along at a brisk pace.

"Ow! Wow! Leggo!" screeched Sam. "You're only making things worse for yourself. I'm an officer of the—law, I am."

But the stout man only grinned and made no reply. And as the town was reached Sam got completely desperate.

With a sudden swift wriggle he managed to free himself and started to scram. But the stout man put out one foot, and down came Sam on all fours with a crash that shook him.

"No more funny stuff from you, my lad!" said the other, as he picked up Sam's ankles. "We're not far from the station now. Get a move on!"

And so, walking on his hands, the luckless Sam was pushed along like a wheelbarrow. In a few minutes the police station was reached and, once inside, Sam collapsed on the floor of the charge-room.

"Hallo, Nichols!" cried the officer in charge. "Got that pickpocket you were after?"

"No, I'll go back for him later," replied the stout man. "But I've got this bird. He tried to pass as a plainclothes officer to me, when I was in charge of one of the stalls, by arrangement with the proprietor who knows that I'm looking for a pickpocket who's working the fairground."

Sam, who had got to his feet by now, nearly fell down again at these words.

"What—what—you're a police officer?" he gasped.

"Yes, in plain clothes," laughed Nichols. "There's my warrant card. Perhaps you'd like to show me yours now—you didn't do so at the fairground!"

Sam realised that the game was up. He had no warrant card, of course. But what he was searched the officer's purse he had stolen, now empty, was found on him.

"Why, it looks as if this chap is the pickpocket as well!" cried Nichols. "Anyway, now we've got him, we'll keep him."

And a few minutes later Sam was behind the locked door of a cell!

(Another of these funny stories in our next number, Friday week.)

11-4-42

RUN TO EARTH!

The Three Mustardeers race—and win adventure!

"I say," said Roger, "there's no mustard in this sandwich! Somebody's got to have it, so last round that tree's the unlucky one. Right? Off!" Round and back in a flash—but not Mary. "Roger! Jim! See what I've found." In searching in a bush for her hair-brow she had stooped in her mad rush. Mary had found a leather case. "A wireless deceiver," she cried, when Roger opened it. "Receiver, you mean," Roger growled, "and it isn't a receiver, it's a transmitter. Here's a notebook. Maybe the owner's name's in it."
"What's up here!" said the Home Guard Sergeant, looking at the unconscious stranger, and then glancing through the notebook: "Crumbs! we thought we'd caught a spy," said Roger, beginning to feel uncomfortable. "And I'm certain you have," said the Sergeant.
"This transmitter and code book explain a lot that's been happening at the factories lately. Information's been leaking out—but I think you've got a stop to that. Good chaps!"
But the clever stranger was delighted with his success. Of course, he had no intention whatever of taking the stall proprietor to the police station. He had a very different idea in view.
What that idea was he made plain when the pair of them had gone about half a mile along the country road.
Making sure nobody was about, Sam suddenly stopped.
"Look here," he said, "I don't want
But in the book there were only pages of letters and numbers. "My stars! you two, this looks queer!"
A crackle of breaking twigs. A voice snarled. "Do not touch!" A large hand snatched the book from Roger.
"Look out, kids," yelled Roger, and brought the stranger down in a great Rugger tackle. Quick as lightning, Jim snatched up the transmitter and another in hard on Mary man's head. "We'll watch him, Mary—you bring the Home Guard from the post along the road—run!"

Said Jim:

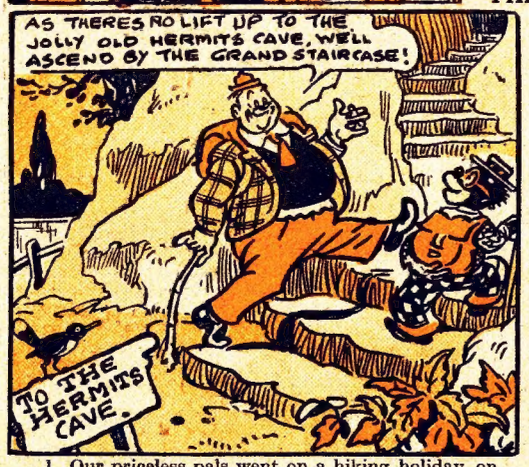
"Glad we found it, as the woman said when the maid mislaid the Mustard tin."

Mustard is the hero of most "inside" stories—every boy and girl should remember that. It helps to keep your tummy in good working order so that the villains of the piece (aches and pains) don't have a chance to get hold of you. What a bit of luck—isn't it ?—that mustard is now with Mustard.

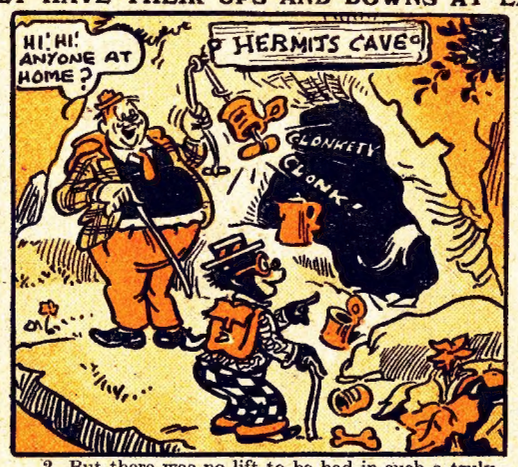
COLMAN'S MUSTARD

PINHEAD and PETE

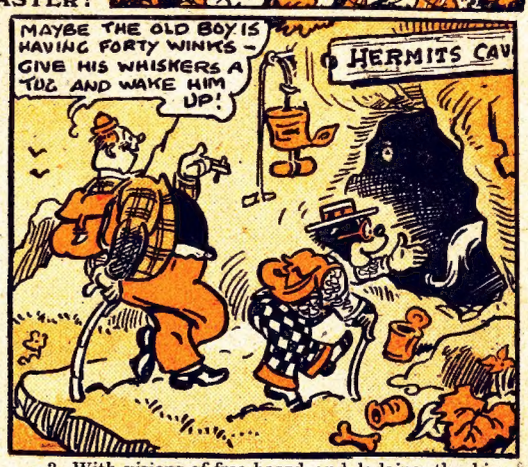
THEY HAVE THEIR UPS AND DOWNS AT EASTER!



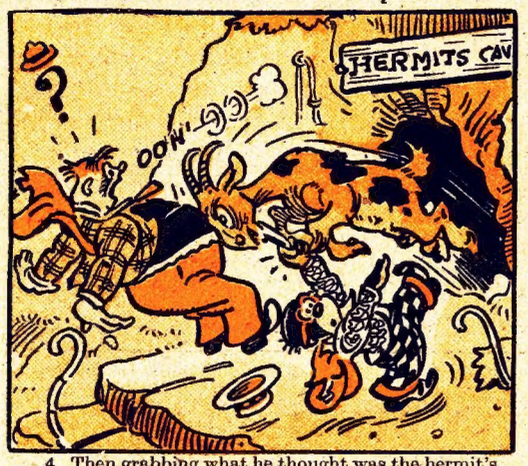
1. Our priceless pals went on a hiking holiday on Easter Monday, and when they came to the hermit's cave they decided to pop upstairs and pay his nibs a visit. "Coo! Where am de lift?" puffed Pete.



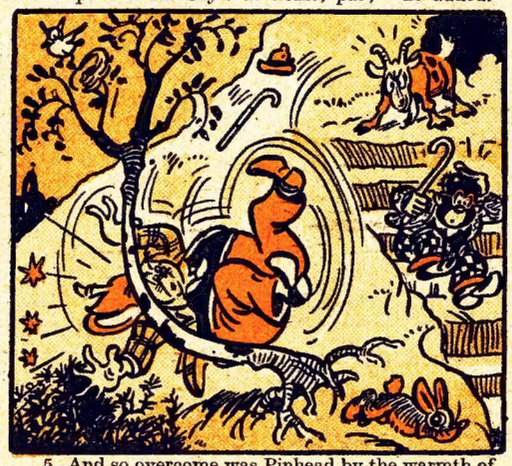
2. But there was no lift to be had in such a truly rural spot, as Pinhead explained, so they had to step it out up the rocky steps right to the very top. "I hope the old boy's at home, pal!" he added.



3. With visions of free board and lodging, the big boy played a merry tune on the tin bell hanging over the doorway, but with no result. "You leave dis to me! I knows how to wake him!" cried Pete.



4. Then grabbing what he thought was the hermit's whiskers, he bearded him in his den as it were, and got the shock of his life. For out galloped a goat!

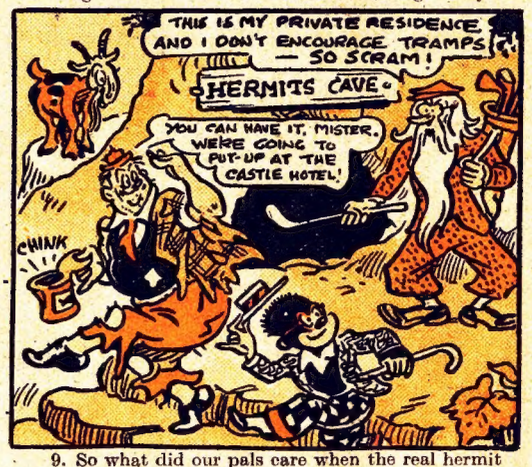


5. And so overcome was Pinhead by the warmth of the welcome he gave them, that he hit the trail all the way back to where he had started from. 'Sfact!

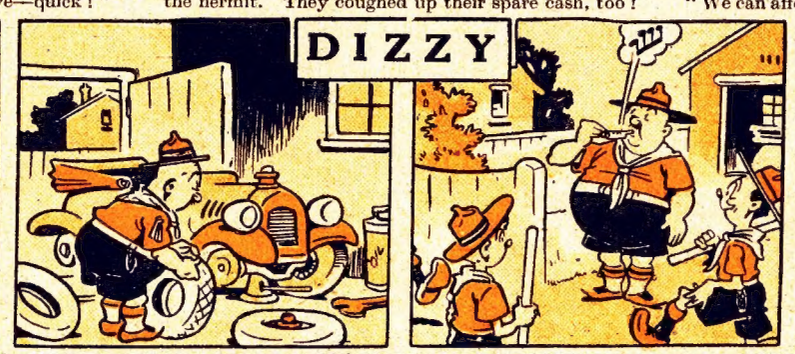
6. "Hi! What's de hurry?" shouted Pete, bunking down the steps again after his old friend. Seeing he had landed in a furze bush, he got busy—

7. And soon yanked him out, looking slightly the worse for wear and tear. "Coo! You do look a sight!" cried the coon. "Dere's somebody coming dis way, too! Let's bunk back to the cave—quick!"

8. Then a funny thing happened. When the bunch of trippers saw Pinhead sitting near the cave, still moaning and groaning, they naturally thought he was the hermit. They coughed up their spare cash, too!


THIS IS MY PRIVATE RESIDENCE AND I DON'T ENCOURAGE TRAMPS — SO SCRAM!
HERMITS CAVE
YOU CAN HAVE IT, MISTER. WE'RE GOING TO PUT-UP AT THE CASTLE HOTEL!
CHINK

9. So what did our pals care when the real hermit returned from his game of golf and ordered them to scram. "Keep your hair on, whiskers!" they cried. "We can afford to stay at a posh hotel now. Cheerio!"



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